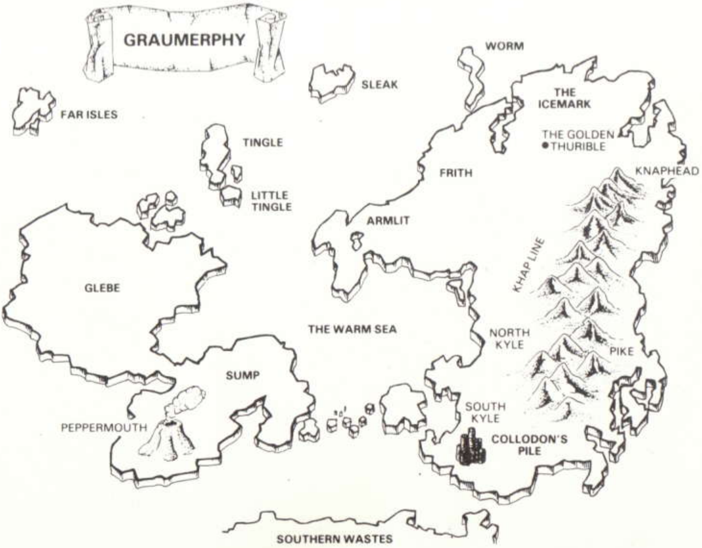
Heavy on the Magick



From GARGOYLE
~the GAMEMASTERS


GRAUMERPHY
WORM
SLEAK
FAR ISLES
TINGLE
LITTLE TINGLE
THE ICEMARK
THE GOLDEN THURIBLE
FRITH
KNAPHEAD
ARMLIT
KHAP LINE
GLEBE
THE WARM SEA
NORTH KYLE
PIKE
SUMP
SOUTH KYLE
PEPPERMOUTH
COLLODON'S PILE
SOUTHERN WASTES

Dungeons and How to Enter them

Axil the Able stood in three inches of stagnant water and surveyed one of the most dismal dungeons he had ever been thrown into . . .

30 seconds earlier, he was sitting in front of the ox-roast in that famed haunt of the Occult. The Golden Thurible, engaged in his favourite pastime of Wizard-Baiting. His target for the night was one Master Therion, he of the bald head and piercing eyes, said to be the cleverest Magician in the Icemark, if not all Graumerphy.

And what a good story Axil was telling – a new one about Therion, a certain Moon creature and a rather gullible Elf – really, the sudden silence of his audience should have warned him.

The crowd parted as Therion strode across the floor, dangerous in all his 10 degrees! Standing squarely in front of Axil, and shrouded by the flames of the ox-roast, he began talking in that dry-leaves voice he normally reserved for Elementals. It was a long and complicated speech, touching lingeringly on Axil's parents, upbringing and eating habits. When, after a while he began to slow down, Therion raised a dismissive twig-like index finger and flung a bemused Axil several hundred leagues across Graumerphy, into the dungeons beneath the dreary castle called Collodon's Pile.

In the dank twilight, Axil tutted – and then took stock. He was, at least, clothed; he carried a large leather pouch, and, on a nearby table, there was a book.

The title read as follows:
"The Net of Gugamon – a Grimoire; wherein is contained the proper rites for the Convocation of various Demonly Princes, the procurement of lesser spirits, together with sundry workings, conjurations, manifestations, Symbols relating to all manner of Astral Phenomena . . ."
and so on for several more pages, in the rather turgid style thought necessary for such book's.

Unfortunately, apart from the title, there seemed to be little more than a rather tattered contents page. But, since Axil thought of himself as a fairly accomplished magician (actually, he barely scraped by at the grade of Neophyte), he felt that simply possessing such a book ought to be useful – they didn't call him Axil the Able for nothing! (Indeed, many didn't call him Axil the Able at all, but struck for the more picturesque Axil the Awfully Adequate or Axil the Absolutely Average...)

So, with a flourish, one very strange book, and a hope that Mistress Luck would favour him for once, he marched from the room in search of a Way Out!

In the next room was a Sign . . .

Dungeons and How to Survive them

Since Dungeons in general are fairly unhealthy places, and this one is no exception, the best way to survive them is to Get Out! In fact, there are three separate exits (all of which may lead Somewhere in the Future). To help you locate them you have a book of Spells (which you can add to) and your not insubstantial Wits; to hinder you there are Wandering Monsters, Demons, Traps, Tricks and Puzzles.

In the main, comporting yourself in a Dungeon is something you just have to learn by experience – but, generously, here are a few general tips.

Starting Up

When the Option Screen is displayed, select option 1 and Away You Go! You may have noticed that the program had already generated values for Stamina, Skill and Luck. While you can't alter, the values themselves, you can re-allocate them – select option 6 and the values will be realigned. It depends on whether you think Skill counts for more than Stamina, or perhaps you just feel Lucky!

When Saving or Restoring a game, you will be asked for a Version letter – this is to ensure that the right game is restored, so keep a note of Version letters.

Note, however, that Saving a game will deplete your Stamina, so that a Save cannot be used as an easy way of getting round difficult choices!
Saving and Restoring Axil allows you to save Axil's current experience and Grade, as well as (some) items that he is carrying, and pass them across to future modules or new adventures. While this is an option that could be utilised in this game (to take advantage of the benefit of hindsight?), its true application is Somewhere in the Future!

Communication

Communicating with the program is all done through Window 2 (the middle window), and is dealt with fully in the section on Merphish.

Status

Your Stamina, Skill and Luck are a reflection of your current abilities. If you run out of Stamina, you Die; your Stamina and Skill together affect the outcome of conflicts; your Luck will influence virtually all your actions.

Combat will reduce your Stamina a lot, most other actions will reduce it a little, but taking food or drink may well increase it; other special objects will enhance your Skill and Luck.

Experience

As you progress through the adventure you will gain in experience: this will not only enhance your status characteristics, but, exceptionally, advance your Magical grade, which will allow you access to items and knowledge not available to the lower grades.

Combat

All combat is Magical – physical encounters with other creatures are often fatal. If you decide to engage in a macho bout of Blasting, check your own and the monster's status before each round – it may be capable of hurting you more than you can hurt it!

But Blasting is not the only way out of a tight situation. Some monsters, and all Demons, may have information on objects which may prove useful, and often the status of a creature will give you a clue of how to deal with it.

Unlocking

Most locks that you might encounter are Magical locks and therefore are opened Magically by Magical keys! Naturally, they might not immediately be recognised as keys but they need only be dropped by a lock to be effective. Other locks can be opened by Magical passwords; Speak clearly and firmly to the locked object, as Dungeons are a major cause of Deafness.

Stuck?

If you're really stuck, ask Apex – or try Examine OBJECT.

MERPHISH and how to Speak it

All input is in Merphish, a language similar to English but somewhat more compact, if not terse.

All commands take the form:

Keyword (Object) followed by a Return/Enter

Spaces are unnecessary and are ignored.

Keywords are entered as just the first letter (occasionally two letters as in North-East etc) and are expanded on output; the names of both animate and inanimate Objects must be entered in full. Unrecognised keywords will be queried.

Commands can also be entered as a string, with each command separated by a comma, and the final command followed by a Return – none of the commands in the string will be actioned until the Return is entered.

A single delete will cause the command back to the previous comma of Return to be "forgotten"; a comma or Return is considered to confirm a command. (However, see Halt below).

Output caused by a command being actioned is put to a new line and indented; any command or command string being input will be interrupted and lost.

Note that the program will check for syntax errors, but will attempt to make some sense of all accepted input – this often has interesting results. For instance, to examine a bottle it is not necessary to first position Axil next to a bottle – when he receives the command, he will go to and examine the bottle nearest to him in that room – if there is one.

There follows a list of Merphish Keywords:

N North	NE North-east	NW North-west
S South	SE South-east	SW South-west
E East	W West	L – Left R – Right

H – Halt; this will abandon the command being actioned and the rest of any outstanding command string.

Z – a special function to swap the information in Window 1.

O – return to Option Screen.

X – (Object) Examine the named object.

P – (Object) Pick up the named object.

D – (Object) Drop the named object.

Spells:

I – (Object) Invoke the named Demon.

B – (Object) Blast the named object or monster.

F – (Object) Freeze the named object or monster.

Fuller details of spells can be found in the section on the Grimoire, but you might try experimentation – it will often be deadly. Other spells may become available to you as you progress, but these you can work out for yourself.

Here are a few Merphish object names:

ASMODEE	ASTAROT	AXIL	BELEZBAR	BOOK
BOX	BOTTLE	LOAF	CANDLE	CHAIR
DEMON	MAGOT	OBJECT	TABLE	WALL
MONSTER	SWORD	ROCK	SIGN	RUBY

Talking to Other Denizens of the Dungeon is possible, be they Demon, Monster or Thing, but the conversational form is typical of the spartan Merphish language (you might suspect that some members of the early Merph cultures had a strictly limited attention span).

Conversation is carried out as follows:

"name, object"

(the leading quote marks are mandatory, the final quotes are optional).

Where name is the name of the Demon, Monster or Thing that you are addressing; object is the name of the Demon, Monster or Thing that you wish to be attacked or about which you require information or that you wish to locate etc., depending on the nature of the creature that you are addressing. As you might discern, conversation is a pastime not to be undertaken lightly, since the opportunities for misunderstanding are many!

The Net, being the Grimoire of Gugamon the Mage

It has been stated elsewhere that the book found by Axil consisted of the Title, a contents page and little else.

That "little else" is laid out below, restored and interpreted from the Original and Ancient Merphish.

"Be Thou warned – attempt no conjuration except that Ye possess the right Talisman; neither approach nor touch a Spirit, for the Demonic folk are quick to cut Mortality to the bone. Instead, place Ye the talisman on the ground and proceed with thy invocation from a distance; but, let it be known to the Wise, that the presence of such Things that are comfortable to thy Chosen Spirit, will ease the Translation of such Knowledge as may be imparted.

And here, for those with eyes to see and Wit to understand, are the Names and Natures of the Princes...

ASMODEE – the Great Destroyer; whose number is 122 in the House of Mars; whose aspect is that of the Basilisk; whose colour is Green and whose plant is the Nettle and who bows to all Gems Red.

ASTAROT – the Spirit of Assemblage; whose number is 1376 in the Sign of Gemini; whose appearance is Legion, who moveth through Rock Solid; whose pantacle is a Flaming Sword; whose perfume is Wormwood and favours the Orchid and the Magpie and bows before the Lustre of Tourmaline.

BELEZBAR – the Master of Flies, who Nature is Deceit and reveals all Deceit; whose number is 20, in the Firmament of Stars; who reveres the Amaranth and Musk and all manner of Locust; who bows to startling Turqoise.

MAGOT – the Diviner, who knoweth the situation of Hidden Treasures; whose aspect is that of a Baboon; whose colour is Yellow and whose number is 443, in the Realm of Air; who craves the scent of Galbanum and bows to secret Topaz and Chalcedony.

And the number of Magick is 11; but the number of the Great Abyss is 24..."

And here the book is rent and tattered and contains no more, unless you can add to it yourself.

Somewhere in the Future

It is the intention that, Somewhere in the Not-Too-Distant Future, new adventures for Axil will appear.

These will take two forms:

- Heavy on the Magick modules, which will interface with the current adventures directly; i.e. they will be the continuation of the adventure from each of the three exits from the current game.

- new Graumerphy adventures, featuring other locations and characters of the enchanted and whimsical land of Graumerphy.

Both adventures and modules will be capable of accepting saved Axils, together with any terrifically useful objects, from other adventures.

It is anticipated that new modules will only be available direct from Gargoyle, while complete new adventures will be available from honest retailers everywhere.!
In addition, it is also hoped that a small book will be produced giving more information on Graumerphy and its inhabitants.

Future Productions

Heavy on the Magick Modules: Collodon's Pile – the castle above the Dungeons.

The Tombs of Taro – a strange and terrifying catacomb adjacent to the dungeons.

Paradise Reglossed – in which things are not as heavenly as they seem.

Complete Adventures

The Trials of Therion – what happened when Axil returned!

Booklet: The Magicians Guide to Graumerphy!

Note! Send no money until you see announcements in the press!

Hints and Help

For a complete hint sheet for Heavy on the Magick, send an envelope, 220mm x 110mm, bearing your name and address, together with a first class stamp to:

HOTM Hints, Gargoyle Games Ltd., 74, King Street, Dudley, West Midlands DY2 8QB.

Acknowledgements

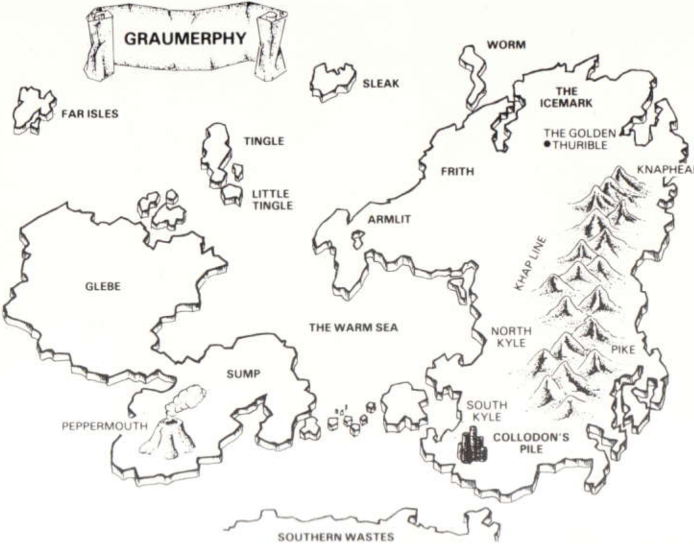
The Systems of Magick described in this game is derived from the Western Occult Tradition; those who wish to read further on the Matter, might study the following:

The Golden Dawn by Israel Regardie.
Magick in Theory and Practise by A. Crowley.
The Book of the Sacred Magic of Abra Melin the Mage.

For those who relished the flavour of the Land of Graumerphy, the Dying Earth series by Jack Vance, and the Myth books by Robert Aspirin will afford enjoyment.

The cover artwork was specially commissioned from S.B. Graphics of Birmingham.

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